

## CLAIMS

[30990128]

1. A method of permitting secure access between a service external to a network firewall and a client internal to the firewall, comprising the steps of:
    - 5 - (a) effecting an HTTP GET operation or equivalent thereof from the client to establish a communications socket for communicating data from the service to the client;
    - (b) after a predetermined interval effecting another GET operation or equivalent thereof to close the communications socket, irrespective of whether access between the service and the client is required to continue; and
    - repeating steps (a) and (b) while access between the service and the client is required to continue.
  - 10 2. The method of claim 1, wherein the predetermined interval is less than another interval after which client software enforces termination of a communications socket established by a GET operation or equivalent thereof.
  - 15 3. The method of claim 1 or claim 2, wherein information is transferred from the client to the service by an HTTP POST operation or equivalent thereof.
  - 20 4. The method of any one of the preceding claims, wherein successive messages transferred between the client and the service are identified by a globally-unique identification created by the client and communicated to the service.
  - 25 5. The method of claim 4, wherein the globally-unique identification is communicated via an HTTP GET or POST operation or equivalent thereof.
  - 30 6. The method of claim 5, wherein the globally-unique identification is communicated in a URI relative path component.
  7. The method of any one of the preceding claims, wherein communications with the client traverse a proxy service located on the client side of the firewall.